THE MARYLAND YELLOWTHROAT

A Publication of the Maryland Ornithological Society, Inc.

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DNR Reports...

The regulated taking of migratory birds has been with us in this country for a long time. With the signing of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act in 1918 protection of songbirds, waterfowl, shorebirds, and other migratory birds came under federal jurisdiction. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service is the lead agency responsible for migratory bird protection. The authority for protection of resident game birds is with the various state wildlife agencies, including DNR. As a result, taking of all bird species is covered by the combination of federal and state authorities. Taking is usually regulated by hunting licenses and seasons for game birds or permit processes for nongame species.

This level of protection afforded birds is not as comprehensive for all other wildlife. For game species it is, but for reptiles and amphibians protection is only afforded by some states.

In Maryland, reptiles and amphibians have been classified as nongame wildlife since 1973. Those listed by DNR as threatened or endangered are protected from taking or collecting by our endangered species regulations. Until recently, however, the issue of legal taking of the non-endangered reptiles and amphibians was a gray area.

New regulations were adopted on April 1, 1993 by DNR establishing possession and permit procedures for native reptiles and amphibians. In addition to regulating possession, these new regulations address captive breeding and commercial trade, including selling. The intent of the regulations are to protect and conserve native populations of reptiles and amphibians while maintaining the many educational and economic benefits derived from them.

Basically, the regulations allow possession of no more than 1 bog turtle, wood turtle, or spotted turtle, 4 individuals of each native reptile or salamander, or 25 individuals of each frog, toad, or red-spotted newt without a permit. The possession in excess of these limits requires a permit from DNR. The permit cost $25 per year. The limits apply regardless of the origin of the animals. Thus, if a person wants to own 6 eastern kingsnakes, all to be purchased from a pet store, he needs a permit. The pet store also needs a permit to sell native species. No animal sold may have come from the wild in Maryland. All animals sold must have been captively produced or legally obtained from out of state.

For possession or breeding purposes, some of the animals may be taken from the wild, but not in excess of the limits set above with certain exceptions. No species on Maryland's threatened and endangered species list nor bog turtles, wood turtles, spotted turtles, timber rattlesnakes, or scarlet snakes may be taken from the wild.

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Board of Directors Meeting March 20, 1993

The Minutes to the January 16, meeting were accepted as amended.

Treasurer's Report - Larry Fry handed out the May 1, 1992 through March 7, 1993 report, an expanded treasurers report is available. He needs all bills and vouchers for expenditures in his hands by April 30, 1993 so that they can be paid. Each Chapter should remind the chapter treasurer that their annual report is due.

Budget Report - Emily Joyce handed out copies of the budget. She then explained certain items. The budget was offered for approval and unanimously approved.

Conference Report - The June 3, 4 & 5, 1993 conference is just about set. The committee has looked at St. Mary's College in Emmitsburg. If the board agrees, contracts can be negotiated.

Education Report - A small group met on March 7, 1993 and made great progress in defining the Education Committee. Linda Bystrak has volunteered to be chairman. It was decided that the committee would have a member from each chapter. Chapter presidents are to send the names to Bill Newman and Linda Bystrak. Bill McIntosh mentioned that the Manual of Operations would need rewriting for this change in the makeup of the committee. A report was handed out to the board members which is attached at the end of these minutes.

Investments Report - A meeting is being schedule with the financial advisor for mid April. Some changes in the investments are already being made.

Library Report - There was nothing new to report, however Joy Wheeler mentioned that *Maryland Birdlife* is available in libraries throughout Maryland.

Sanctuary Report - There are workdays in April, Irish Grove on the first Saturday (April 3rd) and Carey Run on April 24th. Lots of help

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Thank You

This is the last issue of the *Yellowthroat* for which I will serve as editor. It has been a pleasure helping the MOS in this capacity for the past 8 years, but I feel it is time to move on. Working to promote birding, ornithology, and wildlife conservation in Maryland comes second nature to me, and I think the *Yellowthroat* and MOS continue to make solid strides on all these fronts. I hope some benefit and enjoyment has been shared by the membership through the newsletter. I thank the members who have expressed kind words to me over the past several years for the quality of the publication.

Most of all, I would like to thank the authors. Without their contributions, there would be no newsletter. You know who they are, through their familiar bylines.

During the past several years, Norm and Fran Saunders, in particular have stood out in their tireless efforts to compile the calendar of events. Fortunately, the Saunders have generously agreed to replace me at the editorial helm. I am confident that Norm and Fran will continue to improve the *Yellowthroat*.

Additionally, the tireless efforts of Helen Ford, and her dedicated mailing team of John Ford, Sally Rowe, and Joanne Hollis can not go unrecognized. This is really the group that brings the publication to your door. Helen has graciously agreed to continue in her present capacity.

One final request. With the Saunders moving into the editorial chair, we need someone to compile the calendar. This is an important job, and something that can be done at home. Please contact Norm if you are interested.

Again, thank you and I wish everyone a found adieu. "I'm headed for Assateague!"

Mark L. Hoffman

DNR

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Now, the child who finds a box turtle and keeps it as a pet is legal in doing so. Hopefully the educational value that turtle brings to the child about the environment will outweigh the loss to the environment of that individual turtle. Reptiles and amphibians have tremendous potential for increasing environmental awareness. Many of your and my first environmental experiences were with the frog or turtle we caught in the nearby woods or from the snake we bought at the local pet shop. These opportunities we are trying to maintain, but at the same time protect our native population. For those species that any collecting will cause population problems, such as with bog turtles, now we have the mechanism to stop it. The key is to balance some limited taking for environmental education with what our native reptile and amphibian populations can sustain. Hopefully, these new regulations have found that balance.

Glenn Therres

Board News

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is needed for the Carey Run work day as they are replacing 5 windows and a ceiling.

Atlas Report - The manuscript was taken to the publisher on January 29th. The editor is on another project that will take about 4 weeks to finish and then will start on our Atlas. The publisher says that we will hear back from them in six to eight weeks, however this may be an unrealistically early date. The editing process will then begin. Some errors and changes have already been detected.

County Lists Reports - All the county lists have been received. The speakers list is still available.

Nominating Committee Report - The following are the nominees for the next year:

President - Bill Newman,
Baltimore Chapter
Vice-president - Allen Haury,
Anne Arundel Chapter
Secretary - Sybil Williams,
Montgomery Chapter
Treasurer - Larry Fry,
Harford Chapter

Publications Report - The March 91 issue of Maryland Birdlife is out and the next issue will be out soon.

Scholarship Report - There are five applications for the ornithology scholarship (two are available). There are fifteen applications for the ecology scholarships (Five are available). The committee was very pleased with the number of applications. There could be shortfall in funds for these as the investments have been in relatively low interest funds. The questions was raised on how to manage a possible $400 shortage. The President, Bill Newman, volunteered to use the monies budgeted for the presidents expenses for this purpose.

Conservation Report - It is very important to write, call or go to see your representative in Annapolis and let them know how you feel about the bills pending. The budget has just been passed and all ecological items have been cut. This could have a very negative long term effect. DNR has asked that the Governor put funds back into Program Open Space (POS). No bonds were approved although they were authorized. Recently support came through on eleven projects. DNR added some major changes. One of these would give grant money to local jurisdictions. Another that was not well presented, would allow the sale of excess lands. This would allow DNR to sell off any land acquired but not needed for the purpose. The Governor agreed to raise the cap on POS funds but this now has to pass George Edwards sub-committee. This sub-committee is made up of the following delegates: Jennie Forehand, John Slade, John Gary, James Proctor, Peter Franchot, James McClellan, John Astle, Donald Fry and Brian Frosh. If your delegate is on this committee, it would be a good idea to call him/her and let your views be known. There is a growing anti-environment feeling. The issue of "takings" whereby the government may have to repay a private property owner restricting his right to develop his/her property.

DNR is inviting citizens to make their views known as to the wildlife management practices being followed. Linda Bystrak will be going to the March 27, 1993 meeting.

DNR has also proposed a hunting season for Canada geese on the Western shore, five geese per day for eight days, September 7 to 13, 1993. Maryland is losing the Canada goose population on the Eastern shore. It was felt that this season was to keep hunters happy who will be restricted in the hunting this year on the Eastern shore, although the reason given for the season is to control the population on the Western shore where they can be obnoxious on golf courses, lawns and parks. This may not be the best way to control the population and keep them away from areas where they are a nuisance. Public hearings will be held in March 1993. If you miss the hearings, writing to Wildlife, DNR in Annapolis, MD. There is also the problem of the mute swan, they are also a nuisance. Rick Blom had an article in the Baltimore Sun recently on this problem.

The new tract on Patuxent Wildlife Research Center that was recently acquired from Ft. Meade, is going to be closed during the week and only open weekends. This is supposed to save money but since this is staffed mainly by volunteers, it won't save much. A letter to the Secretary of the Interior might help.

Each Chapter should have a designated conservation person who will write the legislature as various items come up.

There are many good organizations doing excellent conservation work. The Audubon Activists is working on re-authorizations of the endangered species act. The Audubon Naturalists is local and does very good work. One of the best is the Maryland Conservation Council. It would be good for each Chapter to ask that they be put on mailing lists for those or other groups or to join them so that they are automatically on the lists.

On Saturday, March 27th and Sunday, March 28th, there will be a wildlife art show in Ft. Washington, Maryland. These has been held for the past three years and all proceeds go to Patuxent Wildlife Visitors Center.

Old Business - The MOS brochures were available and passed out to each Chapter. The insert will be updated each year with names of new officers and the amount of dues. The deadline for getting the new information in is September 1.

New Business - For the last two years Rick Blom and Gene Scapullar have been doing gull counts. These are a one day survey counting species and ages. They have done Frederick County and east and would like to expand this endeavor. They have put together a gull workshop which they would present at three to five locations. This would encompass all twenty possible species seen in Maryland and all ages with differing views. They would need to duplicate slides. This study would create a baseline in Maryland showing how the populations of the various species are maintaining themselves. A proposal for funding this project will be submitted at a later date. The cost of the duplications may run about $300.

A hunter who leases property adjacent to Irish Grove for deer hunting, has contacted MOS asking permission to hunt on Irish Grove and in return he would patrol the property and keep poachers off. Even without being allowed to hunt the Irish Grove property he says he would police the property for poachers. It was decided that members of the Sanctuary Committee should meet with this man and discuss his proposition, although the consensus of the Board is that hunting should NOT be allowed. Linda Bystrak found and removed a number of traps and saw some newly built deer stands. At the same time she met a man who wanted to donate some property, but keep hunting privileges.

There might be a Board meeting in May if needed, but there will not be one after the Annual Meeting at the conference. The Board

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Board News

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meetings will be spaced as evenly as possible through the year.

Jim Stasz has had a heart attack and triple by-pass surgery and is at home recuperating. The refreshments and hospitality of the Carroll County Chapter was very welcome and we all thank them.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joan Stephens, Secretary

Ecology Scholarship Winners 1993

Helen Miller Scholarship
David DeVault
Park Ranger
Anne Arundel County
Dept. of Recreation & Parks

Helen Miller Scholarship
Barbara M. Cosner
5th Grade Teacher
Fairview Outdoor Recreation Center

Helen Miller Scholarship
Thomas M. Trafton
Science Teacher
Havre de Grace High School

Orville Crowder Memorial Scholarship
Sharon Alfinito
Park Ranger
Anne Arundel County
Dept. of Recreation & Parks

Edith Bourne Memorial Scholarship
Mrs. Carol Kehring
Outdoor Educator
Harford Glen

Ornithology Scholarship Winners

Chandler S. Robbins Scholarship
Mrs. Beatrice E. Nicholls
4th Grade Teacher
Sussex Elementary School

Eleanor C. Robbins Scholarship
Joanne L. Riddle
Wild Bird Educator
Wild Bird Center

Frederick County Bird Finding Guide

The Frederick Chapter of MOS has just published *A Guide to Bird Finding in Frederick County, Maryland*, written by Stauffer Miller. It is 42-pages, soft cover and spiral-bound, and features 21 maps in with a section of site guides that covers the entire county, as well as accounts of 200 out of 270 bird species recorded in Frederick County. It also contains a checklist of county birds, indexes of place names and species, and a calendar of dates on which to watch for specific species. The book retails for $6.50, including Maryland tax, of which almost $1.50 will be used to support environmental projects. Books may be ordered from Kathy Calvert, 2404 Doubs Court, Adamstown, MD 21710, for an additional $1.50 for shipping and handling (total $8.00).

The ups and downs of Maryland Birds

Based on Maryland Breeding Bird Survey data from 1966-1991, the following species are showing the greatest declines and increases in the state. Rates of increases and decreases are given as percent change per year.

Declines
-7.4% Vesper Sparrow
-5.2% Grasshopper Sparrow
-5.1% Eastern Meadowlark
-4.8% Rufous-sided Towhee
-4.8% Field Sparrow
-4.6% Prairie Warbler
-4.4% House Sparrow
-4.0% Northern Bobwhite
-4.0% Brown Thrasher
-3.6% Ring-necked Pheasant

It would appear that we are losing many of our field and agricultural birds. Note that there is not one woodland or wetland species associated with this list.

Increases

23.1%	House Finch
17.8%	Herring Gull
10.3%	Mallard
9.8%	Laughing Gull
7.6%	Canada Goose
7.3%	Fish Crow
6.2%	Cedar Waxwing
5.9%	Orchard Oriole
5.6%	Cattle Egret
5.3%	Ring-billed Gull

The only potential surprise here might be the relatively large increase in orchard oriole populations. Otherwise, the list is composed of the usual list of invaders and urban tolerant riff-raff.

If you are interested in a printout with the complete listing of population trends for Maryland birds you can call Bruce Peterjohn and request one for free at 301/498-0330. Data on population trends for other states are also available.

MOS Calendar - July-August, 1993

Wednesday, July 21

FIELD TRIP. Jug Bay. Bike & Hike Birding Evening. Meet at Shelby's Landing at end of Croom Airport Road. Meet 6:30 p.m., bring mosquito repellant and liquid refreshments. For further information, contact Jean Tierney at 301-627-6074.

Saturday, August 7

FIELD TRIP. Harford. Site and time TBA for this trip in search of shorebirds. For information call Dave Webb (410-569-0107).

Wednesday, August 18

MEETING. Jug Bay. Birding By Canoe. Park at area of Patuxent River Park near canoe racks. Limited number of canoes. The leader is Jean Tierney, 301-627-6074.

Saturday, August 21

FIELD TRIP. Baltimore. Bombay Hook NWR. Contact Pete Webb for further information, 410-486-1217.

"The Return of the Natives"

a native plant symposium
sponsored by the Irvine Natural Science Center

Thursday, August 26th
8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Leslie Sauer
Andropogon Associates
Philadelphia, PA

Warren Schultz
Nat'l. Gardening Mag.
Burlington, VT

J. Morgan Grove
Yale School of Forestry
New Haven, CT

Craig Tufts
Nat'l. Wildlife Fed.
Washington, DC

Cost: $60, $50 for Irvine members and students
Lunch provided

Location: One mile north of I-695 exit 22 on Greenspring Avenue

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Week, Mini-week, Weekend
Call (410) 546-0911

Trinidad and Tobago

April 9-19, 1994. Staying at the fabulous Asa Wright Nature Center in Trinidad and at the Kariwak Village on Tobago. Scarlet Ibis, Oilbirds, hummingbirds at arms-length, tanagers, toucans, and trogons. A true jungle experience in an unspoiled rainforest. Leader: Rob Gibbs, naturalist at the Brookside Nature Center in Wheaton, along with native guides. Organizes by Bill Murphy, author of A BIRDER'S GUIDE TO TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO. For detailed information write to Bill at 101 Rathbone Terrace, Marietta, Ohio 45750 or call 614-373-3966.

NOTE!

The copy deadline for the September/October issue of the *Yellowthroat* is August 1, 1993. Please send chapter activities to:

Norm and Fran Saunders
1261 Cavendish Dr.
Silver Spring, MD 20905
H: 301-989-9035
W: 202-606-5723

MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.

MOS State Membership Dues: Individual $10, Household $15, Junior (under 18) $5, Sustaining $25, Life $400. These are the dues for members-at-large. If you wish to join one of the 15 chapters, their active member dues are additional. Contact the appropriate chapter for further information.

c/o Helen Ford
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Annapolis, MD 21403

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